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# BLM

## Bureau of Land Management



# Can I Get Free Land from the BLM?

## ***Am I entitled to free land from the BLM?***

No. While that was true at one time, there is no free land.

## ***What about homesteading?***

Congress abolished homesteading in 1976 with passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), which made it national policy to retain the public lands in Federal ownership. Today, the BLM manages the public lands for multiple use of the varied resources found on them. This allows all Americans to share in the benefits of the public lands. For example, BLM management provides opportunities for outdoor recreation, helps the Nation meet its need for energy and minerals, and preserves natural, historical, and cultural resources on the public lands.

## ***I have seen an advertisement that says I can obtain low-cost land from the BLM. Is this true?***

No. The BLM occasionally sells land, but only at fair market value as required by law. The advertisement by private companies not associated with the Federal government may ask you to send in money for information about how to buy land for \$1.25 an acre (or a similarly low figure). The BLM recommends that you read carefully any advertisement on this subject and be cautious about sending money. The BLM will provide you free and accurate information about land sales.

### ***Does the BLM sell buildings?***

No. The General Services Administration (GSA) administers the sale of all surplus Federal property.

### ***I heard that I could get land if I have a mining claim. Is that true?***

No. Although current law allows you to stake a mining claim on Federal lands that are open to mineral entry, beginning in 1994 and in each subsequent year, Congress declared a moratorium on applying for a mineral patent to a properly located and recorded mining claim. While this moratorium is in effect, the BLM cannot accept mineral patent applications. You may obtain further information on locating mining claims from any BLM State Office.

### ***How can I get a copy of a land or mineral patent?***

You may obtain microfilm copies of land and mineral patents from any BLM State Office Information Center at a minimal cost per page. In addition, some land patent records are available for selected States on the BLM's Web site at <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>.

### ***How can I get additional information?***

You should contact your local BLM office. You can obtain the address from the BLM's Web site at <http://www.blm.gov> or call 202-452-5125.

***The Bureau of Land Management***, the Nation's largest land manager, is responsible for 262 million acres of public land—nearly one-eighth of all land in the United States and 700 million acres of Federal subsurface mineral estate nationwide. Most of these lands are located primarily in the 12 Western States, including Alaska, though the agency does have significant holdings east of the Mississippi River.

The BLM manages for a range of uses that is as broad as it is impressive. The mix of allowed uses depends on an area's resources and local demands. For example, some lands are managed primarily for energy production, some for the protection of specific threatened or endangered species, and still others for recreation. On all its acres, however, the BLM provides some essential services that protect the public, such as wildfire management and law enforcement.

**For more information on  
the BLM, go to:  
*[www.blm.gov](http://www.blm.gov)***

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## ***How does the BLM select land that might be sold?***

Through its land-use planning process, the BLM identifies parcels of land for potential sale that fall into one of the following categories:

- scattered and isolated tracts that are difficult or uneconomical to manage
- tracts acquired by the BLM for a specific purpose that are no longer needed for that purpose
- land where disposal will serve important public objectives, such as community expansion and economic development

However, the growing cities and towns of the West are spreading closer to once-remote BLM-managed public lands. As a result, the public in general—and Westerners in particular—appreciate the open space guaranteed by BLM, which means that the agency considers its land sales even more carefully than in the past.

## ***May I select a specific parcel of BLM-managed public land that I am interested in purchasing?***

No. You may bid only for those parcels that the BLM has decided to sell on a competitive-bid basis.

## ***Are there any lands for sale in the East?***

No. Sales of BLM-managed lands take place only in the Western States: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming.

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